

TOTALLY TEENS HEALTH CENTER

Leadership in Building "TEENS" a Healthier Tomorrow

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DEALING WITH THE HOLIDAYS

With the holidays approaching most of us think about fun, parties, good cheer and family get-togethers. It's a time to celebrate and enjoy the season. While this is true for many of us, there are many who come into the holidays with a sense of dread, as the holidays actually cause an increase in depressive and anxiety symptoms. Many people refer to these symptoms as the "Holiday Blues".

The "Holiday Blues" cause someone to be depressed, sad, anxious and very stressed instead of experiencing joy and excitement. These feelings are often triggered by the following:

- Fatigue
- Unrealistic expectations
- Financial constraints
- An inability to see family and friends
- Demands of shopping and preparation for parties
- Pressure to be with family

Those that experience the "Holiday Blues" may begin to experience changes in their weight, sleep disturbance, extreme sadness, crying, loneliness, irritability, lack of interest, low energy and sometimes, even thoughts of suicide. These symptoms can begin with the holiday season but often can last into the new year. The level of severity is very different for every person and often depends upon the trigger or events the precipitate the feelings.

If the approaching holidays fill you with dread and despair instead of excitement and joy there are ways to cope and prepare yourself. The most important thing to remember is to keep your expectations realistic. Don't stretch yourself too thin and make sure to learn the word "No". If it is something you can't do or feel uncomfortable doing it's perfectly fine to say so. Make sure you ask for help and let others share the responsibilities. Spend your time with supportive people and do things that you enjoy. Make time to relax and get enough sleep and nourishment. If it is past memories that get you down, create new traditions, do something nice for someone else and make sure to live in the present. While these ideas are not a cure all, they may help make the holidays more manageable and more tolerable.

Recognize the symptoms and talk to other people about how you are feeling. If the symptoms persist, worsen or you become suicidal, make sure you contact a professional.

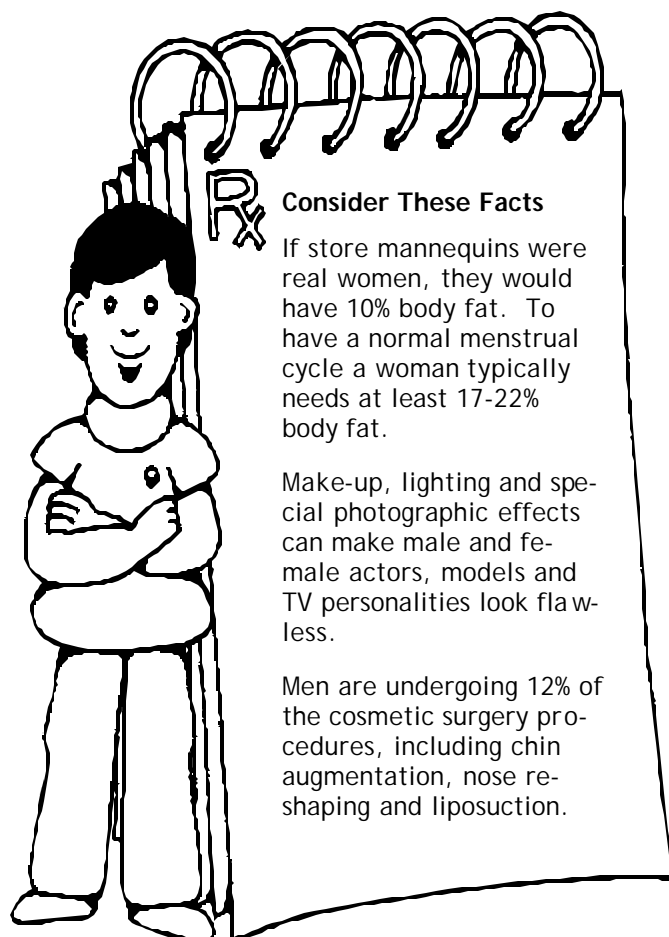
No matter how you spend the holidays, make sure you always make time for yourself. Sometimes the best gift we can give ourselves is time and self care!

Do You Have Any Idea What's in a Cigarette?

There are over 4,000 different chemicals found in one single cigarette, and 108 of these are known to cause cancer.

<u>Chemical</u>	<u>What is it commonly used for?</u>
Carbon Monoxide	Car Exhaust
Nicotine	Pesticide or Insect Killer
Ammonia	Toilet Cleaner
Arsenic	Rat Poison
Butane	Lighter Fluid
Acetone	Finger Nail Polish Remover
Cadmium	Car Batteries
Methanol	Rocket Fuel
Formaldehyde	Used to preserve or Embalm dead bodies
Plutonium 210	Used in Nuclear Bombs

Obstacles don't have to stop you.
If you run into a wall, don't turn around and give up.
Figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around it. **Michael Jordan**



Is it a Cold or is it the Flu?

Cold and flu viruses probably account for more unnecessary trips to the doctor than anything else.



The problem is, there is not much your doctor can do except provide you with sympathy and tell you what you already know: "Rest, take a pain reliever, and drink plenty of fluids."

A cold starts out slowly with some minor sniffing, sometimes sneezing, with general symptoms of nasal congestion, a scratchy throat, fatigue and sometimes a low grade (<100) fever and cough. Colds typically last 3-7 days.

Flu symptoms hit you all at once. Sudden onset of high fever (up to 104), severe headache, extreme fatigue, severe muscle and joint aches, and sometimes a dry, hacky cough.

You may be able to drag yourself to school/work with a cold, but with the flu, you will usually be too sick to leave your bed.

Nutrition Nuggets Challenge

Do you know what a half a cup of pasta actually looks like? What about a tablespoon of ranch dressing? Most of us think we know what a serving size is, but we are actually over estimating.

Your challenge, should you choose to accept it, is to experiment with portion sizes and discover what things like ½ cup and 1 tablespoon actually are.

First you will need a set of measuring cups and spoons. You may need to ask you parents where they are in your kitchen, or you may need to borrow or buy some.

Then raid the kitchen for whatever you can find. Here are some good places to start:

Spaghetti, mac and cheese, rice, mashed potatoes (all cooked) - ½ cup
Grits (cooked) - ½ cup
Juice - ½ cup
Breakfast cereal - 1 cup
Ranch dressing - 1 Tablespoon
Peanut Butter - 2 Tablespoon

Now go and find some of your other favorite foods, read the label to find out the recommended portion, and measure those. You might be surprised to find out what a serving really is. Compare the actual serving size to what you usually eat. Is it more, less, or about the same? If you are eating a lot more than what the serving is, you may be eating too much.